



FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Government of the District of Columbia

Over the past five years, the Department of Employment Services (DOES) has made tremendous strides toward its goal of linking workplace development to economic prosperity. Name any segment of our population, and DOES has reached out in some way to help the group secure employment or to offer people the tools they need for economic self-sufficiency. From young people to senior citizens, non-English speaking residents to veterans, welfare-to-work to ex-offenders, the Department continues to seek out and help those wanting to improve their employment circumstances.

With the full support of my office and the cooperation of the Council of the District of Columbia, Director Gregg Irish and his staff have developed and implemented innovative and trend-setting methods to make the Department's programs and services accessible to all District residents. The *DCNetWorks* Virtual One-Stop system, for example, offers access to employment and unemployment assistance via the Internet to District residents. The agency has also transformed community sites throughout the District into career centers and has launched a mobile center that brings job service information to hard-to-reach constituents. These efforts illustrate that DOES has been operating as government should. It is proof that District agencies can aim for and achieve the highest standards of good government.

I invite you to take a close look at the accomplishments in this report and witness how far DOES has come in the past five years. I believe that you will be favorably impressed with the Department's past efforts and excited about its future goals. These accomplishments have given rise to tremendous opportunities for our citizens, our local business people, and the workforce development system in general.

Anthony A. Williams

Mayor, District of Columbia

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The District of Columbia's Department of Employment Services (DOES) remains committed to its mission to provide comprehensive employment services to the District's growing workforce. In spite of the significant challenges we faced in the past five years, we have met and often exceeded expectations to empower and sustain a diverse, vibrant workforce in the District, achieving in 2004, for example, 94% of the U.S. Department of Labor's Workforce Investment Act performance standards.

Our overall approach to workforce development has resulted in the delivery and implementation of key technological enhancements to best serve District residents. Our many new initiatives have expanded and provided more services effectively and efficiently, according to our official performance indicators. Our Senior Community Services Employment Programs (SCSEPs), for example, significantly exceeded both its enrollment and job placement goals. The groundbreaking re-entry initiative, Project Empowerment Plus, a federally funded pilot program for ex-offenders, surpassed its planned service targets for 2004. The Office of Youth Programs and the Mayor's Youth Leadership Institute (MYLI) have grown and contributed significantly to the revitalization of the youth services sector of the District. With the launch of the Department's new Business Development Center, we have further supported the goals of entrepreneurs by spurring economic development via the creation and expansion of minority-owned businesses.

With the unflinching support of Mayor Anthony A. Williams, we expanded our collaborative alliances in both the private and public sectors to help create an economically sound environment for our residents. Indeed, one of our greatest achievements has been our ability to expand our access across all sectors to serve our customers. We've forged relationships with businesses, government agencies, labor unions, faith-based initiatives, and community based organiza-

tions. And we spearheaded our own legislative initiatives that have allowed us to further deliver targeted services to returning and disabled veterans through the nationally recognized **REALifeline** Initiative, which assists military service members and their spouses' transition into the civilian workforce.

Economic stability is, without a doubt, the lifeline of the District. And as we move forward with modernization and mobilization, we're taking a "next level" approach to deliver services that will meet our customer's specific needs and reduce unemployment in the nation's capital. We're moving boldly to create and expand on a dynamic workforce fueled by Mayor Anthony Williams' vision of improved skills, training, and opportunities for all District residents.

We invite you to take a close look at our accomplishments. You will agree that, while there is indeed a lot more left to be done, we've done immeasurably well, and we've used our resources wisely to benefit the residents and businesses of this great city.

Gregory P. Irish

Director, Department of Employment Services



IN RETROSPECT

The Department of Employment Services (DOES) has solidly built upon its progress during the past five years. The consolidated efforts of the previous five years are reflected in gains in youth employment, apprenticeships, diverse training programs, services to veterans, and a ground breaking pilot program serving welfare-to-work recipients and ex-offenders. Several of our initiatives have become the model for national programs. All have brought hope and a real chance at a better quality of life for District residents by providing them with the means to obtain a living wage.

The key addition of automated upgrades over the past five years has raised the standard of service delivery that includes reporting and data collection, streamlining program operations and improved efficiency in the areas of Labor Standards, Workforce Development, and Unemployment Compensation programs. The Department continues to make progress on its goal to provide many of its most critical services around the clock, 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week. For example, the Department's important technological strides in unemployment have made it possible to significantly expand access to services for both job seekers and employers. These new features include direct deposit of unemployment benefits, Internet filing of unemployment claims, employer Internet registration and electronic tax payments. All of these features have greatly improved the ability of the staff, employers and program participants to efficiently use technology to meet their needs.

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The programs administered by the Department throughout the past five years remain vital to the community. More than 14 One-Stop Career Centers and satellite offices have been strategically located throughout the city to provide the public with employment-related services and programs. Over the years, technological advancements, however, have streamlined service delivery allowing the District to close some of the One-Stop Centers and redirect services in others. Our Mobile One-Stop Center—equipped with state-of-the-art computers, telecommunications capabilities, environmental controls, and accommodations for disabled customers in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)—brings our programs and offerings directly to the most underserved neighborhoods, provides “grass roots” on-site services, and participates in community activities. And, to aid our dislocated workers, the Department readily responds through our network of One-Stop Career Centers with a variety of services ranging from job search and training assistance to job openings and important labor market information. In three years, we have successfully placed 10,183 residents in private sector unsubsidized jobs and more than 263,000 have accessed our One-Stop Centers.

Improvement, expansion and revitalization of youth services have been a high priority of Mayor Anthony A. Williams. The Department now delivers year-round employment training, and leadership and youth mentorship programs under one umbrella of services called the Passport-to-Work Program. We've also worked to prepare more than 2,000 out-of-school youth in targeted communities to enter the workforce by combining school-based learning with work-based experiences. To our credit, we were the first in the nation to utilize the Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) system, in 2001, as a mechanism to pay youth workers.

Partnerships and co-sponsorships have been especially critical to our success at DOES. To further enhance the scope of services we provide to our clients and to better integrate DOES into the array of

organizations providing employment-related services, we've developed numerous special initiatives these past five years to strengthen our relationship with other service providers and increase collaborative alliances in both the private and public sectors. These partnering arrangements have allowed us to expand our access across all sectors, which have helped us to create an economically sound environment for those we serve. We have forged partnerships with businesses, government agencies—federal and local, labor unions, faith and community-based organizations as well as spearheaded our own legislative initiatives, furthering our ability to deliver targeted services to an array of special populations, including returning and disabled veterans, at-risk youth, the elderly, and ex-offenders returning to our communities.

One of the District's greatest workforce development challenges is the low level of reading comprehension, writing, and basic math skills among adult District residents. Responding to a 2001 report issued by the District State Education Office showing the District of Columbia as last among all U.S. states and territories in adult literacy, we implemented several literacy initiatives in 2002 to help our constituents overcome this hurdle. We forged partnerships to help with our campaign against illiteracy. In 2003, with the Mayor's Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning Initiative, the D.C. Workforce Investment Council, and the D.C. State Education Office, we secured literacy coaches for our One-Stop Career Centers to provide on-site literacy services to those customers requiring assistance.

To enhance customer service at the Department, Director Gregg Irish made staff development and service delivery top priorities by fostering a structured and contemporary work environment. On June 28, 2001, the Department officially opened its modern, state-of-the-art facility at 77 P Street, NE (officially changed to 64 New York Avenue, NE), which now houses both our administrative headquarters and the Labor Standards Bureau. The Workforce Development Bureau and its programs are located at 609/625 H Street, NE and offers more pro-

fessional, customer friendly offices, as well as an enhanced technological infrastructure. By consolidating our office space, we were able to improve our service delivery capabilities to our clients.

Director Irish also implemented standards and procedures that laid the foundation for heightened expectations of employee performance and accountability at DOES. Through vigorous monitoring and management accountability initiatives, the Department successfully instituted employee and management guidelines on staff attendance, leave requests, smoke breaks, tardiness, and professional workplace decorum. Special attention has also been placed on professional customer service – meaning, equipping the Department with a staff of qualified, competent, and prepared employees who are ready, willing, and able to provide professional services that our customers both expect and deserve. In 2000, the Department developed an advanced-level curriculum that led to staff certification as a Career Development Facilitator (CDF). Thirty-eight employees have since received CDF certifications, which are endorsed by the National Career Development Association. Additionally, our efforts to ensure equal opportunity at DOES have not gone unnoticed. In 2003 during its annual conference in Seattle, Washington, the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) awarded DOES the William J. Harris Award for excellence in equal opportunity within a state agency.

The strength of any government agency is reflected in the way its stakeholders, as well as its critics, view it. Needless to say, DOES has faced its share of highs and lows in the past five years. From natural disasters to terrorists' attacks to budgetary constraints, the Department of Employment Services has never lost sight of its responsibility to the residents of the District. This report, in a modest and moderate approach, will offer a glimpse of some of the successes that DOES has achieved and our ability to remain steadfast in our mission to reduce unemployment and to secure a healthy and stable economic environment in the District of Columbia.



SELECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

I. Accessibility, Partnerships, and Opportunities

Programs are only successful if they reach the intended audience. Throughout the past five years, the Department of Employment Services (DOES) has developed innovative tools to bring economic resources to our constituents. Our goal has always been to keep the District's residents working—by any means necessary. When those we serve are not able to come to us for help, we bring our services directly to them by Internet, mobile van, and satellite offices. We have transformed community buildings throughout the District into centers that provide employment/workforce information and expertise, and have literally driven resources directly to the backyards of citizens.

In July 2000, DOES implemented an ambitious technological initiative to reach its customers with its new **Virtual One-Stop (VOS)** system, a radical improvement to the agency's *DCNetWorks* system, launched in 1998. The DC Virtual One-Stop system became the principal delivery mechanism for the *DCNetWorks* system, integrating all employment-related programs into one system and consequently, eliminating duplication and substantially reducing operational costs. This innovative web-based system allows job seekers, employers, training providers, benefit applicants, and students to immediately access critical employment and labor market information and program services, while employers can post job vacancies, review resumes, and schedule job interviews without staff intervention or assistance. An interface for the visually impaired as well as a Spanish version for the District's Hispanic population was added to ensure increased accessibility. Equally noteworthy is the fact that the District was the first state in the nation to pioneer the VOS system, helping to fine tune key pieces of its software, which in turn allowed other states to follow pursuit. Owing to our gained knowledge of the VOS system over the past five years, and our abilities to uncover challenges, create new strategies, improve processes, and implement best practices, the Department celebrates one of the best VOS systems in the nation today.



In 2004, we continued to enhance our systems. We reviewed all of our automated systems and capabilities and determined that certain enhancements and developments were necessary in order to truly serve the citizens of the District of Columbia. We focused on our Unemployment Insurance (UI) system, one of a few UI systems in the country to offer access through both the Internet and an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system, and made more major automated enhancements. Through the Internet and the IVR system, UI claimants can estimate, and file, their unemployment benefits, enroll in direct deposit transactions, and view 1099 data reported to the IRS, to name a few. Some of our more recent enhancements include:

- **An Automated Unemployment Insurance Benefit System** that generates notices of review, interviews, appeal hearings, overpayments, and interstate claim records.
- **An Automated Unemployment Insurance Tax System** that generates timely notices to employers—delinquent in paying taxes, penalties, or filing their quarterly contributions.

The new and improved features boast a substantial increase in users of the Virtual One-Stop system on a daily basis. VOS is accessed through www.dcnetworks.org.

Our Workers' Compensation Insurance Enhancements

The new **Workers' Compensation Automation System** has streamlined staff access to medical documents and workers' compensation claim records. This system ensures efficient customer service delivery and access to information and responses to inquiries. In the near future, we intend to phase-in an on-line system that both employers and employees can access to complete workplace claims.

Our One-Stop Centers... Our Partnerships

While the Virtual One-Stop system is designed to accommodate citizens who prefer accessing our employment resource at their own leisure - via the Internet, we continued with our efforts to make employment and training programs and supportive services more accessible to the public by transforming buildings into full-service One-Stop Career Centers and satellite centers. To date, we have opened 14 One-Stop Career Centers—seven of which are currently operating—each serving the diverse citizenry of the District of Columbia.

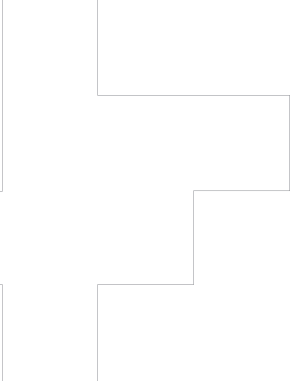
In November 1998, the Department launched its very first One-Stop Career Center at 2626 Naylor Road, SE. The **Naylor Road One-Stop** has been fully equipped to meet the needs of physically and visually challenged citizens. The next year, we opened three more One-Stop Satellite Centers in Adams Morgan—the **Multi-Cultural One-Stop Career Center**, which focused on providing comprehensive work-

force development services to the Latino community; and the **Metropolitan Area Reemployment Center**, which was initially restricted to downsized federal workers, then later enhanced and updated to facilitate public access to a variety of employment and training programs; followed by the **Judiciary Square One-Stop Satellite Center** opened at the seat of local government, City Hall, with access to the D.C. Office of Personnel and city government jobs.

With technology evolving at a rapid pace, the new Millennium brought about the opening of the District's **Link and Learn High Technology One-Stop Satellite Center**, which aptly responded to our constituents' growing interest in technology.

To aid the city's homeless citizens the **Business Improvement District (BID) One-Stop Satellite Center** was opened in 2001 in the heart of the District's downtown. The BID operates on a partnership network and, by 2002, ten partners, including the Addiction, Prevention and Recovery Administration (APRA), the Salvation Army, and Unity Health Care joined us to provide expanded services to our homeless customers. Other partners provided short-term shelter services, transitional housing assistance, nutrition, and legal services.

It became clear that the key to successfully serving our constituents rested on our abilities—as a government agency—to cultivate and maintain partnerships with the private sector and faith and community-based organizations. In 2001, we created a partnership never before attempted in this agency's history: we co-located a public sector One-Stop Career Center within a corporate Learning Center and launched the **South Capitol/CVS One-Stop Career Center**. This was the first center of its type in the nation. This partnership has been featured by the U.S. Department of Labor as a national model of public/private partnership.



Through their Pharmacy Technician Training Program, CVS offered 600 pre-screened welfare recipients a curriculum that included pre-employment work maturity skills, industry-specific occupational skills, on-the-job training, and apprenticeship/work experience. The occupational skills training set the path to a management level position with CVS and graduating participants were encouraged to pursue a pharmaceutical degree at the Howard University School of Pharmacy to help address the shortage of pharmacists.

The closing of D.C. General Hospital, in 2000, left more than 1,800 employees without jobs. As a part of Mayor Williams' multi-faceted effort to help these displaced workers, DOES worked with the D.C. General Career Transition Resource Center, and in 2001, we opened the full-service **D.C. General One-Stop Career Center**. The Department applied for and received an \$876,573 National Emergency Grant from the U.S. Department of Labor which helped us provide career counseling, job search workshops, office space, materials and equipment to assist these workers transition into other jobs.

To date, our largest center and flagship site is the **Franklin Street One-Stop Career Center**, which was also opened in 2001. This center was designed on a partnership model with 13 different organizations and agencies to meet our clients' employment needs. The Franklin Street One-Stop Center has partnered with America Works to provide job readiness and placement services to Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) participants. and with the

Our goal was to help ensure that information and resources got to the underserved neighborhoods, particularly those who could not come to our offices. Equally important, our Mobile One-Stop represents the agency at community and neighborhood events, giving us visibility and helping us establish close community ties.

Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind, preparing blind and visually impaired citizens for the workforce. Other partnerships include Manpower, Monster.com, and Washingtonpost.com.

In August 2002, we opened the **A. Philip Randolph One-Stop Satellite Center**, located in northwest D.C. This satellite office afforded us the benefits of another important and unique partnership with the Metropolitan Washington Council of the AFL-CIO and its Community Services Agency. Staffed by DOES and AFL-CIO professionals, the satellite center offers a wide-range of workforce development services including job search, Internet access, and vocational training opportunities in the areas of hospitality, healthcare, and construction to its customers.

Five months after the opening of the A. Philip Randolph One Stop Satellite Center, the Department celebrated the **Euclid Street Satellite One-Stop Career Center** opening in Adams Morgan. Established in partnership with the District's Office of Latino Affairs and the Ward 1 Community, this center, staffed by qualified, bilingual professionals, offers many of the District's non-English-speaking residents the vocational training necessary to improve their labor market prospects.

June 2003 gave birth to another important partnership for the Department of Employment Services. With Mayor Anthony Williams and officials of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Washington Regional Office, we celebrated the grand opening of our **Veterans Assistance Satellite One-Stop Career Center** in northwest DC. The center, which offers a full range of veterans benefits as well as comprehensive job search and training services, marked the first in the nation established as a collaborative effort between the federal Veterans Affairs agency and a state workforce development agency.

Our Department's relationship with community and faith-based organizations has been equally fruitful and compelling. The District



was one of 12 states awarded a Faith-Based and Community Initiative Grant from the Department of Labor in 2002. From that fund, we created the Office of Faith and Community-Based Partnerships (OFCBP) to help cement strong, sustainable partnerships with faith and community-based organizations throughout the District. In OFCBP's first year, 17 faith-based organizations partnered with DOES, many offering a wide variety of services, such as job placement for the mentally and physically challenged, substance abuse counseling, and entrepreneurial training to our constituents

In 2003, we used funds from the 2002 Faith and Community-Based Initiative Grant to purchase and launch the **Mobile One-Stop Career Center**—a 38-foot, handicapped accessible van, equipped with 10 state-of-the-art computers and workstations, an instructor's terminal, a plasma screen television, telecommunications gear, and environment controls. Our goal was to help ensure that information and resources got to the underserved neighborhoods, particularly those who could not come to our offices. Equally important, our Mobile One-Stop represents the agency at community and neighborhood events, giving us visibility and helping us establish closer community ties.

The Mobile One-Stop Career Center allows consumers to access:

- Unemployment Insurance Assistance
- Disaster Unemployment Assistance Claims
- Employment and training including apprenticeships and on-the-job training
- A case manager to assist customers conduct job searches
- An adult literacy counselor to assess and refer customers to literacy resources
- One-Stop Intake staff to assess and process customers into the VOS System
- Assistance on accessing various online job search systems
- Information on job fairs.

Apprentices Today... Entrepreneurs Tomorrow

The Department dedicates a significant amount of resources to encourage District residents to learn a specific trade and even venture out into entrepreneurial endeavors. The Department understands that skills developed at a young age can grow into an expertise, which may lead to business ownership. Acknowledging early on that not all young people are college-bound, the Department's Office of Apprenticeship Information and Training (OAIT) sought ways to provide an important alternative to the District's youth. The Department developed pre-apprenticeship programs that provided structure, guidance, and educational remediation to customers ineligible to participate in the formal apprenticeship system.

The District's apprenticeship program has been aggressively developing and monitoring new opportunities for capable District residents, 18 years and above with at least a high school or GED diploma or a qualifying score on the General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB). Trainees are linked with hands on, one-on-one training and participate in intensive classroom instructions, making it one of the most effective training models in today's workforce development arena.



In 2000, the **Step-Up Apprenticeship Program** was developed to provide economically disadvantaged District residents with skilled trades and craft training while employed on commercial construction sites covered by the Davis-Bacon prevailing wage law, such as the District's new Washington Convention Center. Participants earned \$8 per hour plus fringe benefits while in the Step-Up Program and were guaranteed placement in formal apprenticeship programs upon successful completion. The Step-Up Program received national recognition and was recommended for national replication from the U.S. Department of Labor, the National Association of Workforce Boards, and the National Association of State Workforce Agencies. To date, a total of 488 District residents have participated in the Pre-Apprenticeship and Step-Up Programs and have developed their skills in trades such as Brick Masonry, Carpentry, Pharmaceuticals, and Machine and Telecommunications Repairs, to name a few.

Expertise in any of the above trades, for example, is likely to lead to a desire for self employment. DOES encourages entrepreneurship and makes every attempt to support such efforts. In 2002, DOES partnered with the Howard University Small Business Development Center and the North Capitol Neighborhood Development, Inc. to establish an innovative Business Resource Center at the DOES' headquarters. District residents hoping to start or expand their businesses were offered technical and business planning support, access to conference room and incubator space, and other business services.

Less than two years later, in 2004, we partnered with the National Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC), to launch the District of Columbia Minority Business Development Center (DCMBDC), an initiative made possible by a \$866,157 grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce. We provided DCMBDC with 11 completely furnished offices with telephone service, a 20-seat computer lab, a 30-seat seminar room, access to copier, printer, and a fax machine, and a six computer business resource center with a library of resources and periodicals. The program, located at DOES' headquarters, supports the creation and expansion of minority-owned businesses in the

Washington Metropolitan Area. In its inaugural year, DCMBDC provided business consulting services to 150 clients, facilitated financial transactions of more than \$14 million to 78 small businesses, identified incubator space and office equipment for seven start-up companies, and sponsored approximately 25 business seminars.

II. SERVING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

At DOES, we believe that it takes sustainable work to change a person's life—figuratively and literally. During the past five years, we've initiated many programs to reach out to District residents of various hard-to-serve communities. From senior citizens to disabled veterans to ex-offenders, DOES has provided opportunities for those who are ready, willing, and able to work, offering to many a brand new chance and lease on life.

Our Senior Citizens

The agency reaches out to senior citizens to ensure work opportunities for them if they so desire. Eligible, low-income seniors, age 55 or older, can find meaningful part-time, as well as unsubsidized, employment thanks to the District's federally funded **Senior Community Service Employment Programs** (SCSEPs). Supported with an \$812,482 grant from the U.S. Department of Labor and the Senior Services America (SSA), the SCSEPs placed more than 28% of its participants into unsubsidized jobs, ranking DOES the 17th highest SCSEPs provider in the nation in 2000.

Each year, there has been an increase in our success rate of serving our seniors. In 2003, for example, DOES served 206 SCSEPs participants, placing 36 of them into unsubsidized employment with local government agencies and community based organizations serving as "Host Agencies." Consequently, SCSEPs met 150% of its unsubsidized placement goal and 122% of its participant enrollment goal. In 2004, the program 158% of its unsubsidized placement goal and 108% of its participant enrollment goal.

Our Veterans

The Department also places a high priority on providing assistance to those who served in our armed forces. More than 1000 veterans were provided with employment-related services through the One-Stop Career Center and special initiatives and 19 workshops conducted for more than 356 veterans in 2004, allowing our veterans programs to meet and exceed all federal performance goals as established by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Additionally, the Office of Veterans Affairs (OVA) has realized several other accomplishments in recent years. Through our Transition Assistance Program (TAP), we have conducted dozens of workshop at the U.S. Walter Reed Army Medical Center and aided many service members returning from Iraq. These vets were provided with information about job opportunities and their rights as disabled veterans in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). To date, more than 720 departing service members have benefited from TAP efforts and the U.S. Department of Labor and the Departments of Veteran Affairs and Defense has donned our REALifeline Initiative, an intensive employment assistance program offering support to service member and their families transitioning to civilian workforce, a national program model.

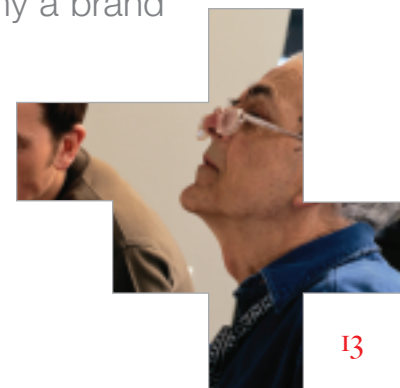
Our Limited English Proficiency Customers

Director Irish has taken great measures to ensure that our customers with limited English proficiency (LEP) are fully integrated into our customer-base and receive the same quality information as our English-speaking customers. In compliance with the Language Access Act of 2001 requiring that all District agencies provide equal access to information to LEP customers, the Department translated more than 55 documents on unemployment insurance and workers, compensation benefits, into Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Korean to better serve our growing and diverse customer base. In fact, we've translated all public outreach information for and about our One-Stop

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Centers, including brochures, flyers, videos, DVDs, into Spanish and Vietnamese. And, callers to our telequent system are greeted in English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean.

In 2003, Director Irish focused on getting his staff better equipped to relate to this community. He issued two equal opportunity policies to help enhance the quality of services provided to the LEP constituents. The first was the Equal Opportunity Policy #03-01, which provided employees with simple instructions on how to request documents that are not translated. The second was the Equal Opportunity Policy #05-01, which required that program managers record and report the number of customers requesting language assistance, and most importantly, the types of languages requested. A short presentation titled, "Preventing National Origin Discrimination" educating the Department staff on customers' rights to language translation was developed and is currently available on the Equal Opportunity page of the Department's Intranet.



Our Welfare-to-Work Customers

The Department of Employment Services takes seriously our charge to help all citizens of the District gain economic stability. For the hard-to-serve community, it has not been an easy task. But we have been unrelenting in our efforts—and it has paid off. Nowhere is this more evident than with our Project Empowerment initiatives. In April 2001, we created the District's welfare-to-work initiative, **Project Empowerment**, in response to the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Act of 1996. The program, which began as Project ARISE—a social-service oriented program—grew out of a close partnership with the Department of Human Services. As the program took on a more employment-driven focus, DOES began working to transition the growing number of TANF recipients to unsubsidized employment and ultimately economic self-sufficiency. Soon Project Empowerment was born.

Our welfare-to-work recipients obtain comprehensive employment services—lifelong learning, skills development, and economic stability. We built innovative partnerships with educational institutions, the business community, community and faith-based organizations, and other government agencies. In fact, 65 local businesses and community-based organizations partnered with DOES for this important initiative. As a result, we aided more than 2100 individuals, who joined the program, saving the District of Columbia an estimated \$2.5 million dollars.

When re-entry and transition are given proper attention, families and communities are restored and ex-offenders regain confidence, self-sufficiency, independence, and self-empowerment. This is the end result that this agency strives for.

Gregory P. Irish

Director, Department of Employment Services

Approximately half of the Project Empowerment participants enrolled in a GED credential program through our education partnerships with the D.C. Public Schools and Sylvan Learning Center. Thirty-five percent successfully completed the course. Eighty-one percent of participants in the subsidized work program were transitioned into unsubsidized employment during the first year, 90% of whom remained with the same employer.

Our Ex-Offenders

Building upon our success with the Project Empowerment program, we successfully achieved similar outcomes for ex-offenders, most whom found it considerably difficult to reintegrate into the community after years of incarceration. In January 2003, the department introduced **Project Empowerment II**, a program mirrored closely after the Project Empowerment welfare-to-work initiative but designed to provide intensive job development services for ex-offenders. This partnership between DOES, the Federal Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA), and the Pretrial Services Agency for the District of Columbia enrolled 400 offenders. One hundred and seventy-one ex-offenders were placed into meaningful jobs.

In April 2004, with a \$2 million grant from U.S. Department of Justice, the joint efforts of Mayor Anthony A. Williams, several local government agencies, and CSOSA officials, we transformed Project Empowerment II into the D.C. Re-Entry Pilot Program: **Project Empowerment Plus** (PE+). PE+ enrolled 283 violent ex-offenders—246 men and 37 women—and engaged more than 80% of them into employment-related activities. Most importantly, DOES and collaborative District government agencies established a comprehensive on-site supportive service network that offered critical services such as health care, mental health care, substance abuse treatment, counseling, licensing, food stamps, childcare, work clothing, and work tools for ex-offender participants.



Hot Spots

The idiom, “Prevention is [often] better than the cure,” is one that the Department and its leadership take seriously. Organized efforts to reach citizens living in the “*hot spots*” of the District are just one example of the precautionary and proactive stance of the Department. In 2003, Director Irish met with his program managers to discuss ways in which the Department could help deter those on the brink of criminal behavior to become more productive, working citizens of the District. What resulted was a massive effort to target the “*hot spots*” in the District and provide intensive job and life skill trainings, computer equipment (software and hardware), and technical expertise to designated schools, churches and non-profit organizations. We’ve also conducted special summer youth employment registrations and, with Ward one’s core team leadership, community and faith-based organizations, we’ve organized a successful job fair that attracted more than 900 job seekers. Designated senior staff work on core teams in participating wards to insure that all community requests, issues and/or concerns are handled effectively and efficiently.

III. PREPARED YOUTH BECOME PREPARED ADULTS

At DOES, we believe that leadership is not just a role. It is a responsibility. It is not something that is assumed overnight. It must be acquired through preparation, experience, mentoring, and access to the proper skill set. Our youth program initiatives are designed with one major goal in mind: give young people every tool and opportunity available to help them explore career paths so that they become a viable, valuable, and valued workforce of tomorrow. Our agency’s track record, particularly over the past five years, shows that we have used every means at our disposal to create sound programs that offer District youth access to opportunities for lifetime learning. Our **Passport-to-Work** program, with its three-component agenda, ensures that our youth are consistently developing skills and attitudes needed to successfully compete in today’s dynamic workforce.

Since 1999, our **Year-Round Program**, authorized by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), has been providing youth, ages 14-18 facing economic, social and/or personal barriers, with work readiness and occupational skills training, academic enrichment, and leadership development skills during the school year. In 2004, the District’s Year-Round Program for youth ranked 2nd in the nation in the Diploma Retention category, 10th in the Skills Attainment Program, and 19th in the Retention category according to U.S. Department of Labor’s nationwide WIA Performance Standards scorecard.

Each summer, our students, 14-21, gain practical professional experience through the **Summer Youth Employment Program’s unsubsidized SummerWorks** initiative and other unsubsidized private and federal sector initiatives. In 2000, of the 7,704 youth registered for our program, 7,011 were referred to jobs. In 2001, *SummerWorks* provided subsidized employment to more than 4,800 youth. An additional 772 youth profited from job opportunities developed through our private and federal sector partners’ donation of more than \$132,000 to support youth summer employment. In 2002, we placed 6,092 students in summer jobs. And in 2004, from the 9,374 District youth who regis-

tered for summer jobs, 8,396 were referred to employers, and 7,337 were confirmed as working. This award-winning program demonstrates what can be accomplished when the entire community mobilizes its resources for the District's youth.

The **Out-of-School Program**, a WIA authorized youth program designed to help young people no longer in school achieve their long- and short-term educational and employment goals, demonstrates DOES's continuum of innovative, year round services. Through contracted service providers, we offer young people job skills, career awareness workshops, work readiness modules, basic education, GED preparation services and vocational skills training. The program has served thousands of young adults, including 153 in 2004, ranking our Out-of-School Program first nationally in the Employment Rate and Employment Retention Rate categories, 4th in the Earnings Change category and 5th in the Credentials Attained category in 2004, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's nationwide WIA negotiated Performance Standards scorecard.

The District also sponsors and oversees other programs designed to help young people become productive and prepared adults. The **Mayor's Youth Leadership Institute** (MYLI), for example, attracts future policy makers and politicians. More than 150 young people each year participate in the Mayor's Youth Leadership Institute, a year-round, four-level program designed to train DC youth in leadership and self-development. This model program offers youth leaders an

Our youth program initiatives are designed with one major goal in mind: give young people every tool and opportunity available to help them explore career paths so that they may become a viable, valuable, and valued workforce of tomorrow.

up-close view of the way government operates. The Youth Government is a replication of the District government and Operation Shadow the Leader, allows youth leaders to shadow city government officials. Additionally, MYLI participants serve as youth ambassadors by hosting young visitors from other cities across the country. In the past five years, MYLI members have traveled with Mayor Anthony Williams and other senior District government and business leaders to several countries, including Belgium and Italy.

Since the District's federally-funded **Youth Opportunity (YO!) Program** began in 2000, it has served more than 1,600 out-of-school youth, ages 14-21. Working with our seven community-based organization partners, this innovative program offers placement and retention of participants in post secondary educational institutions or long-term employment with career advancement opportunities. Although the program ends 2005, YO! participants can boast amazing accomplishments such as a monthly television program, titled *Keeping it Real*, and one hundred and five (105) YO! participants graduates of the Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Cadet Training program, which prepares youth to become firefighters. These graduates have already secured positions with the D.C. Fire Department. Finally, many YO! participants were gained practical experience with ice cream manufacturer Ben & Jerry's, a company franchise in the District.

We have also wrapped our youth program offerings into a unique emergency preparedness initiative. True to the Williams' Administration goals, the city has always been quick to respond to catastrophic events—natural or terrorist in intent—to ensure that our citizens are properly informed and the city continues to thrive. The terrorist act on U.S. soil in September 2001 was no exception. The Department realized that one of the best ways to utilize our young people was to prepare them so that they may be able to educate the community on ways to avert or, at the very least, minimize disasters. In its inaugural year, more than 40 students were selected to participate in the **TEAM DC** Disaster Training program, which trained citizens on how to react safely, swiftly, and smartly during disasters. To



date, more than 500 workshops and presentations have been conducted in nursing homes, summer camps, and community-based organizations in the District of Columbia. In 2003, TEAM DC participants accepted an award from the National League of Cities and were recognized by the Department of Homeland Security for their efforts to help keep the District's residents safe and informed.

The year 2003 brought forth Hurricane Isabel, another catastrophic event that devastated the District and left hundreds of thousands of residents without power, uncounted trees blown down or significantly damaged, serious flooding in low-lying areas, and millions of dollars in destroyed or damaged properties, the Department quickly applied to the U.S. Department of Labor for a National Emergency Disaster Grant of \$1 million and partnering with the Departments of Public Works, Transportation, and Parks and Recreation, we were able to help provide post-storm clean-up, infrastructure repair assistance, and equally important, educating citizens on how to respond to emergency situations.

In 2004, from the 9,374 District youth who registered for summer jobs, 8,396 were referred to employers, and 7,337 were confirmed as working. This award-winning program demonstrates what can be accomplished when the entire community mobilizes its resources for the District's youth.

FINDING SOLUTIONS

The Department of Employment Services has worked feverishly to craft and support legislative measures to enhance our mission to serve the employment needs of the District of Columbia. In all, we've introduced 17 pieces of legislation over the past five years, 11 of which were adopted, as of the writing of this report. To date, the following is a list of the legislation we have championed:

- The Information Technology Apprenticeship Amendment Act of 2000 (D.C. Law 13-257) increases quality apprenticeships to District residents by requiring that IT contract winners of \$500,000 or more register an apprenticeship program with the D.C. Apprenticeship Council for 12 months.
- The Wage-Hour Enforcement Amendment Act of 2000 (D.C. Law 13-245) protects minimum wage for District workers and gave DOES the authority to impose fines of \$300 - \$500 to violators.
- The Unemployment Compensation Administration Enhancement Act of 2000 (D.C. Law 13-270) improves the unemployment compensation program through automated systems, authorizes DOES to access a portion of the surplus interest account funds for automation improvement initiatives, and requires domestic employers to pay unemployment compensation taxes annually.

We will continue to develop and implement programs that will address the realities of those requiring the assistance of the District's labor department.



- The 51 percent District Residents New Hires Amendment Act of 2001 (D.C. Law 14-74) increases employment opportunities for District residents and authorizes penalties on District contractors violation of the First Source Agreement.
- The Unemployment Compensation Emergency Amendment Act of 2001 and The Unemployment Compensation Terrorist Response Temporary Amendment Act of 2001 were immediate responses to individuals affected by 9/11.
- The Unemployment Compensation Services Temporary Act of 2002 (D.C. Act 14-109) authorizes the Department to temporarily retain and rehire certain experienced unemployment compensation claims examiners to assist with the increased workloads associated with the 9/11 disaster and the Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation Program.

- The Unemployment Compensation Funds Appropriation Authorization Emergency Act of 2002, Unemployment Compensation Funds Appropriation Temporary Act of 2002 (D.C. Act 14-531) authorizes the Department to access certain funds available pursuant to the Federal Reed Act to improve the Unemployment Compensation Program.
- Unemployment Compensation Modernization Amendment Act of 2002, Section XX of the 2003 Budget Support Act authorizes the Department to access certain funds in the Interest Surcharge Account to pay for designated upgrades, particularly automation, in the administration of the Unemployment Compensation Program.
- The Neighborhood Economic Development and Investment Act of 2003 (Section 47 directs that TIF Funds, Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) funds, authorized fees, and special assessments be deposited in the D.C. Neighborhood Economic Development Fund and be used for job training and placement and apprenticeships programs as well as for economic development programs operating and administrative costs.
- The Apprenticeship Enforcement Amendment Act of 2003 (Bill 15-150) strengthens compliance with provisions of the District's mandatory apprenticeship statute, D.C. Law 2-156, expands the range of organizations with registered apprenticeship programs, increases apprenticeship opportunities, and requires non-profit organizations to adhere to the requirements of the D.C. Law 5-93, "The First Source Employment Agreement Act of 1984."
- The Unemployment Compensation Weekly Benefit Amount Amendment Act of 2003 (Bill 15-578) increases the weekly unemployment compensation benefit amount from \$309 per week to \$359 and improves the claimant's ability to meet essential living expenses while seeking employment.

FORGING AHEAD

Striving toward economic stability is a never-ending task at the Department of Employment Services. It is an objective that we will continue to approach with the utmost attention and focused strategy. We will continue to develop and implement programs that will address the realities of those requiring the assistance of the District's labor department.

The deficiency in adult literacy is a growing concern for the Department because of its adverse impact on the future workforce. Consider this: the District of Columbia has one of the lowest levels of adult literacy in the nation. Thirty seven percent (37%) of residents read at or below the third grade level. More than 150,000 residents lack the basic literacy skills needed to get or hold an entry-level job. While more than 40% of the city's residents have at least a bachelor's degree, nearly 75,000 lack a high school diploma. In 2001, the GED pass rate for the District was 43.3%, one of the lowest rates in the nation. Approximately 18,000 TANF recipients have less than a high school credential and almost 50% are reading below 7th grade level. Other challenges include deficiencies in English literacy due to the city's growing diversity and a large number of at-risk youth. The population cited in the above data confronts a daunting complex of workforce participation barriers. Likewise, faced with this grim reality, local businesses, especially small businesses, will find it difficult to compete.

These issues, needless to say, will not be corrected overnight. However, the Department of Employment Services remains committed and determined to engineering a more comprehensive and integrated workforce preparation system that identifies and allocates the resources and expertise required to support the Mayor's goal of providing prosperity for all residents.

Enter the Way to Work

The “Way-to-Work Amendment Act of 2005,” is a comprehensive legislative package that will authorize the deployment of intervention strategies and programmatic approaches to help the hard-to-employ residents overcome barriers to employment, compete successfully in today’s labor market, and ultimately achieve economic self-sufficiency. The “Way-to-Work Act” contains elements that encourage District businesses to increase the hiring of residents and to partner with the District government to revitalize the city’s economy and create new job opportunities. Our goals are to...

- Implement a Summer Youth Tax Credit Program
- Create an Expanded Re-Employment Program: Unemployment Insurance
- Implement a Year-Round Out-of-School Youth Initiative
- Create of a Transitional Employment Program and Pre-Apprenticeship Training Initiative Program
- Expand the 2006 Summer Youth Employment Program
- Expand the Mayor’s Youth Leadership Institute
- Establish a “Living Wage”
- Create a Job Opportunity Bank
- Enhance the First Source Program

We will continue to work with the business and labor community, non-profits, and government agencies to refine and define the goals of the Administration’s Way-to-Work initiative before submitting it for approval to the City Council in the Fall of 2005.

ACTUAL FUNDS 1999 – 2004

FUNDS	FY1999
LOCAL	7,923,000
FEDERAL	33,762,000
PRIVATE	0
OTHER	10,991,000
INTRA DISTRICT	764,000
TOTAL	53,440,000

FY2000	FY2001	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004
11,253,000	12,289,000	8,419,000	12,795,000	12,847,000
41,371,000	33,737,000	47,679,000	44,774,000	45,503,000
88,000	-164,000	-216,000	76,000	65,000
12,536,000	14,196,000	15,527,000	20,753,000	17,027,000
2,842,000	7,600,000	7,912,000	7,222,000	3,825,000
68,090,000	67,658,000	79,321,000	85,620,000	79,267,000

Department of Employment Services Locations**Office of the Director**

64 New York Ave., NE, 3rd Floor
Washington, DC 20002

Labor Standards Bureau

64 New York Ave., NE, 2nd & 3rd Floor
Washington, DC 20002

Workforce Development Bureau

609 & 625 H Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002

DOES One-Stop Career Centers**Full Service Centers****Franklin Street One-Stop Career Center**

1500 Franklin Street, NE
Washington, DC 20001 | Hours: 8:00 am – 4:30 pm

***Naylor Road One-Stop Career Center**

2626 Naylor Road, SE
Washington, DC 20020 | Hours 8:00 am – 3:30 pm

***South Capitol One-Stop Career Center/CVS pharmacy**

4049 South Capitol Street, SW
Washington, DC 20032 | Hours 8:00 am – 4:30 pm

*Fully accessible to persons with disabilities and features state-of-the-art equipment

Satellite Offices**A. Philip Randolph Worker Center/
Satellite One-Stop Career Center**

6210 North Capitol Street, NW
Washington, DC 20011
Hours: 8:30 am – 5 pm

**Business Improvement District (BID)
Satellite One-Stop Career Center**

945 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
Hours: 8:00 am – 4:30 pm

**Euclid Street Satellite
One-Stop Career Center**

1704 Euclid Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009
Hours: 8:00 am – 4:30 pm

U.S. Assistance Center, Veterans Affairs Regional Office

1722 I Street, NW, 3rd Floor, Room 335
Washington, DC 20421
Hours: 8:30 am – 5 pm